

our diversity, and to our ever-evolving culture. This embodies the epitome of a mutualistic relationship.

The people of Haiti and the United States have had a long and complex relationship dating back to pre-slavery days. Our cultures and our respective economic histories and destinies are deeply intertwined.

I greatly urge my colleagues to support the permanent extension of Haitians being protected from mass deportation. For 7 years, these Haitians have greatly benefited the American communities of which they have been a part. To pull them away from these communities at such a pivotal point in both the United States' and Haiti's history would equate to nothing short of gross negligence. Let us not neglect the principle of which our Nation was founded upon and continue to assume the role of our predecessors. Help those who are less fortunate.

VENEZUELA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, in the last 2 months alone, reports indicate that nearly 3,000 Venezuelans have been jailed and 69 have been killed by the regime. Peaceful protests have led Venezuelan strongman Nicolas Maduro to issue a decree to convene a constituent National Assembly, what he calls a *constituyente*, in order to rewrite Venezuela's constitution.

But as we all know, Mr. Speaker, Maduro is fooling no one. This is just another attempt to undermine and discredit the current democratically elected legislature in the National Assembly. Another attempt of a power grab which seeks to consolidate more power around the executive and possibly rewrite the constitution to favor only one individual: Nicolas Maduro. Another attempt to pull a fast one over some in the international community who may make the mistake and call this weak and dangerous gesture progress.

But we know the truth. This is not progress. In fact, this is a major setback to democracy. Maduro is once again trying to delay the inevitable: free, fair, transparent, and democratic elections in Venezuela under the supervision of credible international observers.

Making matters worse, Goldman Sachs is also adding to the Venezuelan people's misery. Last week, the investment bank bought \$2.8 billion in Venezuelan bonds, not only providing the Maduro regime a lifeline in the short term but saddling the Venezuelan people with crippling debt repayments in the long term.

When, not if, a democratically elected president comes to the Venezuelan people, they will be stuck with the bill and face the responsibility to pay for this debt.

With so many Venezuelans lacking basic goods, including food, many have taken to calling these bonds hunger bonds, as the regime lines its own pockets and the Venezuelan people continue to suffer.

This is unconscionable, Mr. Speaker. Venezuela's pervasive corruption means any infusion of cash like Goldman Sachs will not benefit the people of Venezuela who desperately need it. Instead, Maduro and his thugs fill their coffers and use the cash to abuse the Venezuelan people and use it to stay in power.

Venezuela's state-owned oil company, PDVSA, was already sanctioned in the year 2011, for helping Iran avoid its own sanctions. Venezuela's Tarek El Aissami, second in command to Maduro, was sanctioned by our U.S. Treasury Department early this year under the Foreign Narcotics Kingpin Designation Act. Can you imagine? The regime's longstanding ties to drug trafficking and other illicit activities are only now being exposed, and U.S. businesses should be avoiding deals with Maduro like the plague.

But the private sector is not the only one aiding the Maduro regime. Sadly, the U.S. government is also helping prop up the regime. How? By allowing purchases of Venezuelan oil. This keeps Maduro afloat. In 2016, Venezuela remained the third largest foreign crude oil supplier to the United States behind Canada and Saudi Arabia. In 2016, oil exports from Venezuela were valued at \$10.5 billion. During the first 3 months of 2017, value of oil exports from Venezuela to us here in the United States was already worth \$3.5 billion. Financial transactions like these made to Maduro or any other despotic regime should be prevented.

We have a moral obligation to respect the suffering needs of the Venezuelan people and help alleviate this suffering.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE REUNIFICATION OF JERUSALEM

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, later today, together with Israel's Ambassador to the United States, Ron Dermer, we will be joined live from Jerusalem by Prime Minister Netanyahu and Speaker of the Knesset Edelstein for a special event to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the reunification of Jerusalem—Israel's eternal capital.

I led a congressional delegation visit to Israel last week, and we met with both Prime Minister Netanyahu and Speaker Edelstein at the Knesset in Jerusalem.

□ 1030

We also toured the famous City of David and saw discoveries that prove, without a doubt, that Jews have lived in Jerusalem for millennia. This is important, Mr. Speaker, because there are efforts at the United Nations—at UNESCO and the Human Rights Council—that seek to erase all Jewish ties to Jerusalem.

As we are set to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Jerusalem's reunification, we should take this opportunity to rebuff such efforts at the U.N. and, instead, reinforce that Jerusalem is, was, and always will be the eternal home of the Jewish people.

HEALTHY FARMS: HEALTHY ECONOMY AND A SECURE NATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. COSTA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about the foundation of healthy living and healthy communities: our food, which comes from our farms.

This month is both National Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Month and National Dairy Month. Although we should bring attention to the importance of eating these nutrient-rich foods, dairy and fresh fruits and vegetables play a much larger role, as we know, in the health of our communities and our country, and they do so not just by providing us food.

In California, we know that dairy products and fresh fruits and vegetables are an integral part of our healthy community and a strong economy. Our farmers also provide economic development in other sectors as businesses are created and expand, investments are made, and innovations arise to support the needs of these farmers and farm communities.

But the economic contributions of California agriculture—American agriculture—do not end at our borders. In California, we produce half of the Nation's fruits and vegetables, and we are the top milk producing State in the Nation. The men and women who own and work on these farms provide both nutritious food for our families and create thousands of jobs across the country.

We know we must make sure that our farmers have the tools to do so, but our farmers need a reliable source of water, a legal and stable workforce, and access to export markets, in other words, fair trade agreements.

We must also ensure that American agriculture is sustainable. We must continue to ensure that it is sustainable for our well-being and the well-being of future generations to come because the bottom line is food does not come from a grocery store. Food comes from our farmers and the land that they farm.

Our food supply is a national security issue, but it never really gets looked at in that light. So by investing in critical programs and infrastructure projects—by ensuring that our farmers have the water, the workforce, and the access to foreign markets—we are not only investing in our farms, but we are investing in the long-term health and security of our Nation.

What is more, people don't realize it, but less than 3 percent of our Nation's population is directly involved in the